Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 18, line 19, with the following redlined paragraph:

In step 428 of the present embodiment, signals that are categorized in temporary state 402 are checked in subsequent searcher operations to determine whether the signal maintains the SNR above T_ACCEPT, which itself satisfies the SNR threshold, over a time threshold, e.g. over N_ACCEPT consecutive SNR measurements. If the signal satiates the N_ACCEPT threshold per step 428, then the signal is categorized in potential state 404. Alternatively, if the signal does not satiate the N_ACCEPT threshold, then it remains categorized in temporary state 402. Step ~~432~~ 428 is illustrated, in one embodiment, by the signal performance in Figure 3. Both span 3 343 of signal 106d span 1 341 satiate the T_ACCEPT 326 threshold, but only span 1 342 satiates the N_ACCEPT 322 threshold. Consequently, at a time corresponding to span 3 343, signal 106d would be categorized in temporary state 402, while at time corresponding to span 1 341, signal 106d would be categorized in potential state 404.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 44, line 6, with the following redlined paragraph:

In step 9016 of the present embodiment, the finger combine indicator (FCI) is set to a value of zero (0). Step ~~9007~~ 9016 is accomplished, in a manner similar to that described in step 9007, discussed hereinabove, albeit opposite polarity. By setting FCI = 0, step 9016 provides a bit flag that will disable, in the present embodiment, the assigned multipath signal from being combined in a subsequent operation. Following step 9016, process 9000c returns to step 9002.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 45, line 26, with the following redlined paragraph:

In step 1003 of the present embodiment, the finger assignment is provided to a demodulating finger where it is demodulated. Step ~~1002~~ 1003 is implemented, in one

embodiment, by step 9003 of Figure 9C. Following step 1003, process 1000 proceeds to step 1004.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 46, line 17, with the following redlined paragraph:

In step 1006 of the present embodiment, the finger assignment is categorized into a state for a subsequent combine operation. Step ~~1002~~ 1006 includes, in one embodiment, inputs of signal-strength 1006a and time period 1006b over which the signal-strength exists. In another embodiment, a finger assignment can be categorized into a state depending only upon multiple signal-strength thresholds. In another embodiment, a finger can be categorized into a state depending upon an additional threshold of time. Step 1006 is implemented, in one embodiment, according to state diagrams 900a and 900b, shown in Figure 9A and 9B. The state machines are effectively implemented by state machines and/ or software/firmware 710 portions of communication device 700. However, the present invention is well-suited to using alternative state diagrams, with a wide range of conditions used to determine a state change or a state maintenance for a given multipath signal. Step 1006 provides outputs of a lock state 1006c and a timer state 1006d. These outputs are implemented, in one embodiment, utilizing the state diagrams of Figure 9A and 9B, and utilizing the hardware 720 and software/firmware 710 portions of communication device 700 of Figure 7. Following step 1006, process 1000 proceeds to step 1008.